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New Compact for Education

To address community concerns regarding public education, on December 13, 2012, Mayor Coleman and City Council President Andrew Ginther convened the Columbus Education Commission. The Commission was charged with examining the challenges facing all students living within the Columbus City School boundaries and resulted in 55 recommendations ground in the following six priority categories:

- Every child is kindergarten ready
- An effort to recruit, retain and support outstanding school-based decisions
- Every child's classroom will have the capacity to support state-of-the-art teaching tools and data
- Every child will attend a high-performing school, every student will be given a pathways to college and career
- Our community will embrace the well-being of all our children
- A New Community Compact for Educational Excellence

The Department of Education of the City of Columbus was established in the early summer of 2014 and is tasked with leveraging the resource of the community to assist in the implementation of the recommendations.



Prekindergarten Initiative

Addressing early childhood learning means bringing awareness and resources to a critical learning stage in childhood development. Children who come to school ready to learn are more likely to succeed academically and in life.

Ample evidence shows that children who enter school unprepared fall farther and farther behind. Students who get a poor start in their earliest years are likely to struggle in high school and, subsequently, fail to graduate. Children who participate in quality prekindergarten experiences significantly improve their early literacy, language and math skills.

An investment in early childhood development for disadvantaged children helps prevent achievement gaps, reduces the need for special education, increases the likelihood of healthier lifestyles, lowers the crime rate, and reduces overall social costs.

With the respect to the expansion of quality early childhood education, the Department of Education's goal is that, by 2020, all children living in Columbus City Schools district should be ready to enter kindergarten ready to learn, and every child whose parent chooses to do so should have access to a high-quality prekindergarten experience.

In the winter of 2013, the Mayor announced in his State of the City address that he would invest \$5 million in 2014 to jumpstart the prekindergarten expansion initiative called Early Start Columbus, and he rallied for collaboration and support from public and private partnerships.

Early Start Columbus began in the 2014-2015 school year and focuses on all-day, year-round services with curriculum aligned with Columbus City Schools and the Ohio Department of Education early learning standards. Currently, Early Start Columbus is serving nearly 500 children, in 31 locations and within 4 Columbus City School buildings.

Through a partnership with the state, funding was made available for quality prekindergarten providers to serve 150 low income four year olds. The State of Ohio's prekindergarten expansions included almost \$2.2 million for quality early childhood education for children within the Columbus City School district boundaries.

Early Start Columbus 2015-2016 Grant



Early Start Columbus (ESC) began in the fall of 2014, and awards were made, serving nearly 500 children in 31 locations and four Columbus City Schools buildings. Following the recommendations of the CEC, the state of Ohio consequently finished the implementation of the revised Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) standards to help ensure all students have access to high-quality, early-learning experience.

The development of these standards represented collaboration between state agencies serving young children, including Ohio Department of Education, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Ohio Department of Health, Ohio Department of Mental Health, Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, and the Governor's Office of Health Transformation. The state agencies worked with national experts and writing teams made up of Ohio-based content experts and stakeholders to revise and expand the standards.

The SUTQ rating revisions now includes holistic family, community and health promotion standards, all following the spirit of the new compact for educational excellence in the City of Columbus. ***To that end, Early Start Columbus will only provide grants to NAEYC accredited service providers or to three-, four-, and five- star SUTQ rated programs. Priority consideration will be given to providers who serve children in the following high needs areas.***

The 2015 Early Start Columbus grant program will be administered by the City of Columbus Department of Education. Both the ESC initiative and the Department of Education are recommendations from the CEC, which continue to remain vital in the development of a new community compact for educational excellence. Starting **Wednesday, March 4th** applications may be submitted electronically at www.columbus.gov/education. The following supplemental materials must be emailed to education@columbus.gov with the application reference number given at time of electronic submission.

- Most recent audit
- SUTQ designation letter from the state and/or NAEYC accreditation or letter of intent to apply for designation
- Affidavit of support

Grant applications are due for Early Start Columbus by **Monday, March 30, 2015, at 5 p.m.** There will be a technical assistance meeting on **Wednesday, March 11, 2015, at 1 p.m.** in the Jerry Hammond Building in the Citywide Training & Development Center, Room 9 at 1111 E. Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43205. Please email education@columbus.gov with any questions. All questions and their responses will be posted on this website: www.columbus.gov/education.

Important Dates

- Application Opens
Wednesday, March 3rd 2015
- Technical Assistance Meeting
Wednesday, March 11th, 2015
- Application Closes
Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 5pm
- Provider notification
End of April

ESC 2015-2016 Provider Eligibility

- Eligible providers must be located within Columbus City Schools boundaries and be one of the following as of February 1, 2015.
 - An existing early childhood early education entitlement grantee licensed by the Ohio Department of Education in accordance with Chapter 3301 of the Ohio Revised Code. Must provide license at time of application.
 - An Ohio Department Education licensed preschool or chartered nonpublic school, in accordance with Chapter 3301 of the Ohio Revised Code that meets the original requirements of the early childhood education program by July 1, 2014. Must provide license at time of application
- An entity operating a childcare program licensed by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services that has at least three-, four- or five-star rating through Step Up to Quality, Ohio's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System or a NAEYC accredited provider.
- Must provide full-day (6 hours), full-year or school-year prekindergarten services.
- Must be willing to allow a third party assessment of Early Start Columbus children.
- Must have been in operation for a minimum of 5 years
- Must provide a current audit
- Must not subcontract the care and education on an Early Start Columbus student.

ESC 2015-2016 Child Eligibility

These funds must be used to provide preschool to economically disadvantaged children who are not currently receiving, or are not eligible to receive, preschool services from other local, state or federally funded preschool programs. Eligibility criteria include:

- Child must be four years old by September 30, 2015.
- Child must reside within the boundaries of the Columbus City School District.
- Family income must fall within 300 percent of the federal poverty level.
- Children funded by Early Start Columbus cannot receive local, state or federal funding. This excludes the State of Ohio expansion grant funds.

ESC 2015-2016 Reimbursement Rate

- If a provider loses their rating below the threshold for participation the provider will be given remediation time to address compliance issues. If measures are not in place that satisfy the SUTQ rating system the provider may not be eligible for future funding and may be ask to return money.
- If you are currently star rated and applying for an additional unit please provide proof of application in the form of a letter from the State of Ohio.

	SUTQ Three Star	SUTQ Four Star	SUTQ Five Star	NAEYC
School Year (39 week program)*	\$8,775	\$9,750	\$10,725	\$10,725
Full Year (52 week program)	\$12,000	\$13,000	\$14,300	\$14,300